



Fairfield, Wawasee students to race for mileage

THE GOSHEN NEWS

— Students from Fairfield and Wawasee high schools will be participating in the annual “Super Mileage Challenge” Monday at O’Reilly Raceway Park in Indianapolis.

The event is held under the auspices of the Indiana Mathematics, Science and Technology Education Alliance.

The students build their own cars under the supervision of a faculty member and are responsible for the design and construction of the car and for raising all funds needed for the project. The engines are furnished by Briggs & Stratton Corp., but all other items must either be purchased or donated by sponsors.

Students from both Fairfield and Wawasee are entering a car in the “unlimited class,” which allows engine modifications. The unlimited class cars typically average over 1,000 miles per gallon.

According to James Thompson, president of IMSTEA, “The students learn not only the technical and scientific aspects of building a high mileage car, they also learn how to work as a team and solve complex problems.”

To be eligible to compete, each school must submit a detailed technical proposal covering all aspects of the design and construction of the car. Such things as aerodynamic drag, friction forces, braking forces and cornering forces must be calculated and discussed in detail. The proposal ensures that the students are exposed to the scientific principles of high mileage as well as the technology of building the car.

Jim Jones, industrial technology teacher at Fairfield, said his class of 20 began working on the project at the beginning of the year. In November, the actual work on the car began.

“This year we tried something new for us and made the car body out of fiberglass. We went on a trip to Supreme to see how they did it, but ours is not like theirs at all,” Jones said.

Local company Composite One also provided assistance to the class.

“It was an interesting experience,” Jones said of the entire process. “At one time the car started smoking when we were still fiberglassing it.” The car had to be taken outside to cool down.

It’s the fourth year the Fairfield students have participated in the “Super Mileage Challenge.”

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Photos



Fairfield industrial technology teacher Jim Jones displays the car that his students will be racing. THE GOSHEN NEWS